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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330
Letter No. 2454 March 30, 1990

THE IMPORTANCE OF HONEYBEES -- When we think of bees, we shouldn't just think of honey & stings, says James Tew, national program leader for apiculture of USDA's Extension Service. Tew says we need to remember how bees pollinate our crops, which directly affects agriculture. Plants pollinated by honeybees include: apples, almonds, blueberries, cranberries, cantaloupes, melons, cucumbers, alfalfa, clover, wild fruits and berries. No other insect pollinates such a wide range of plants, Tew says. Each year, honeybees produce about 250 million pounds of honey -- worth about \$200 million -- as a byproduct of pollination. Contact: James Tew (216) 264-3911.

YEUTTER SWEARS IN TWO -- Sec. Clayton Yeutter has sworn in La Verne Ausman as the 14th administrator of USDA's Farmers Home Administration and Gary Byrne as the 11th administrator of USDA's Rural Electrification Administration.

-- Ausman will oversee policy development & management of all FmHA operations, which provide a wide range of credit & development assistance to farmers & rural communities. He served as deputy undersecretary of agriculture for small community and rural development from April 1987 to April 1989. He first joined USDA in 1986 as director of intergovernmental affairs. He was Wisconsin secretary of agriculture, trade & consumer protection from 1981 to 1986.

-- Byrne will oversee management of the \$37 billion REA portfolio of loans to rural electric cooperatives. He was chairman of the Bank of Alex Brown, Sacramento, Calif., from 1985 to 1989 and president and CEO of that bank from 1987 to 1989. He also served as chairman or director of several other California financial institutions. Contact: Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623.

WESTERN WATER SUPPLY -- The water supply outlook is average or better in much of the Northwest, but below average almost everywhere else in the West, says Manly Wilder, associate chief of USDA's Soil Conservation Service. The most dramatic changes during February took place in Washington, southeast British Columbia and northwestern Oregon, where well-below- and below-average snowpacks improved to near- and above-average snowpacks. "We could have used more moisture in the form of snow for the coming growing season," says Wilder. "But, farmers and ranchers need to be prepared as best they can to deal with expected shortages." Contact: Diana Morse (202) 447-4772.

FOOD AID PROGRAM -- Sec. Yeutter has sent Congress the Bush Administration's 1990 farm bill proposal for food aid to needy countries. Yeutter says three food aid programs are most likely to be considered during the farm bill debate -- Food for Peace (or P.L. 480), Food for Progress and "Section 416(b)." "The United States has a long history of generous food aid and we intend to have that tradition continue," Yeutter said. Contact: Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623. For a copy of the proposal publication: "1990 Food Aid Legislation." call: Marci Hilt (202) 447-6445.

WIND EROSION DAMAGE SETS RECORD -- Wind erosion has damaged nearly 5 million acres in the Great Plains since November 1989 -- the second highest figure on record for this time of year, says Manly Wilder, associate chief of USDA's Soil Conservation Service. "We're seeing the continued effects of several years of drought," Wilder says. The greatest damage was in North Dakota. Only in the 1954-55 season was land damage higher for the Great Plains for this period, Wilder said. Contact: Diana Morse (202) 447-4772.



NEW VIDEO ON AG -- USDA TV's Pat O'Leary has produced and directed a new 14-minute video -- "America's Most Crucial Industry" -- which details agriculture's contributions to the U.S. "Agriculture has provided the foundation for the development of commerce in the U.S.," says Paul E. Kindinger, USDA's director of public affairs. USDA R-TV Chief Vic Powell wrote the video. "America's Most Crucial Industry" is available on 1/2-inch VHS tape for \$12.00 from: Video Transfer, 5709-B Arundel Ave., Rockville, Md. 20852; phone: (301) 881-0270. Media review copies are available from: Marci Hilt (202) 447-6445. (USDA Photo by Bob Nichols.)

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1712 -- Gary Crawford talks with people who are finding new uses for farm products. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1194 -- The canned meat controversy, proper handling of poultry, extension workers in urban areas, seafood inspection, restaurants & your diet. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1701 -- USDA News Highlights, new tentative USSR/US grain agreement analyzed, poultry litter, a potato pest, new orange variety. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1313 -- A preemptive strike on bollworms, safe insecticide, infection & weight loss, salmonella & the educated consumer, pond algae as fertilizer. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Fri., April 6, dairy products; Mon., April 9, vegetable production; Tues., April 10, U.S. crop production, world ag supply/demand, crop/weather update; Wed., April 11, world cotton situation, world oilseed situation, world grain/crop production, horticultural exports; Mon., April 16, milk production.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE
March 26, 1990

FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on the top states for farm exports.

ACTUALITIES -- Norton Strommen, USDA chief meteorologist, with the latest U.S. weather outlook; Ron Gustafson, USDA economist, with the latest U.S. livestock situation & outlook; USDA Economist Peter Buzanell, on sugar & sweeteners; USDA Economist Shannon Hamm, on vegetables & specialties; excerpts of a speech by Miss America for 1990 Debbye Turner (who is also a veterinary medicine student) at USDA (with B-roll).

NEXT WEEK -- Deboria Janifer reports on U.S. imports of Chilean fruit; Lynn Wyvill reports on Easter egg safety.

AGRICULTURE UPDATE -- Farm programs signup deadline, soil moisture & 30-day weather outlook, ASCS news.

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30-7:45 p.m., EST, Transponder 12D
SATURDAY 10:30-11:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 10D
MONDAY 8:30-9:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 12D
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

OFFMIKE

HOT ISSUE...in Minnesota is whether BST should be used by milk producers, says Cliff Mitchell (KASM, Albany). Cliff broadcast several stories covering producers' request that the state legislature issue a one-year moratorium on BST use. He says Wisconsin's legislative action against BST gave a boost to those in Minnesota opposing it.

GOOD RAINS...have producers dancing, says Mike Buchanan (KBIZ, Ottumwa, Iowa). There has been sufficient rainfall to remove his region from drought conditions, but, he says, just 30 miles to the south conditions remain dry. Largest concern this spring is ground water contamination. Recent reports issued by the state indicate well-water contamination from ag chemicals, but there are calls for a second look. Mike says one report cites surface water findings that were taken last May shortly after field application, but that year-long studies show much lower levels.


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PLANTING...will get underway late April in the region served by Lynn Watts (KMZU/KAOL, Carrollton, Mo.). She says spring moisture has been adequate and that producer interest in new equipment is much greater than at this time last year. Lynn, assistant farm director at the stations, was promoted when former director Miles Carter moved to WIBW, Topeka, Kans.

PRODUCERS...are ready to get into fields but the weather can't decide the season, says Darren Johnson (WKFI, Wilmington, Ohio). Snow on daffodils has everything confused. He says strong sales in parts indicates producers are continuing to delay new equipment purchases. Darren says it's the time of year when the green bean circuit slows and the FFA banquet season begins honoring the best thing grown in America -- our children.



VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division